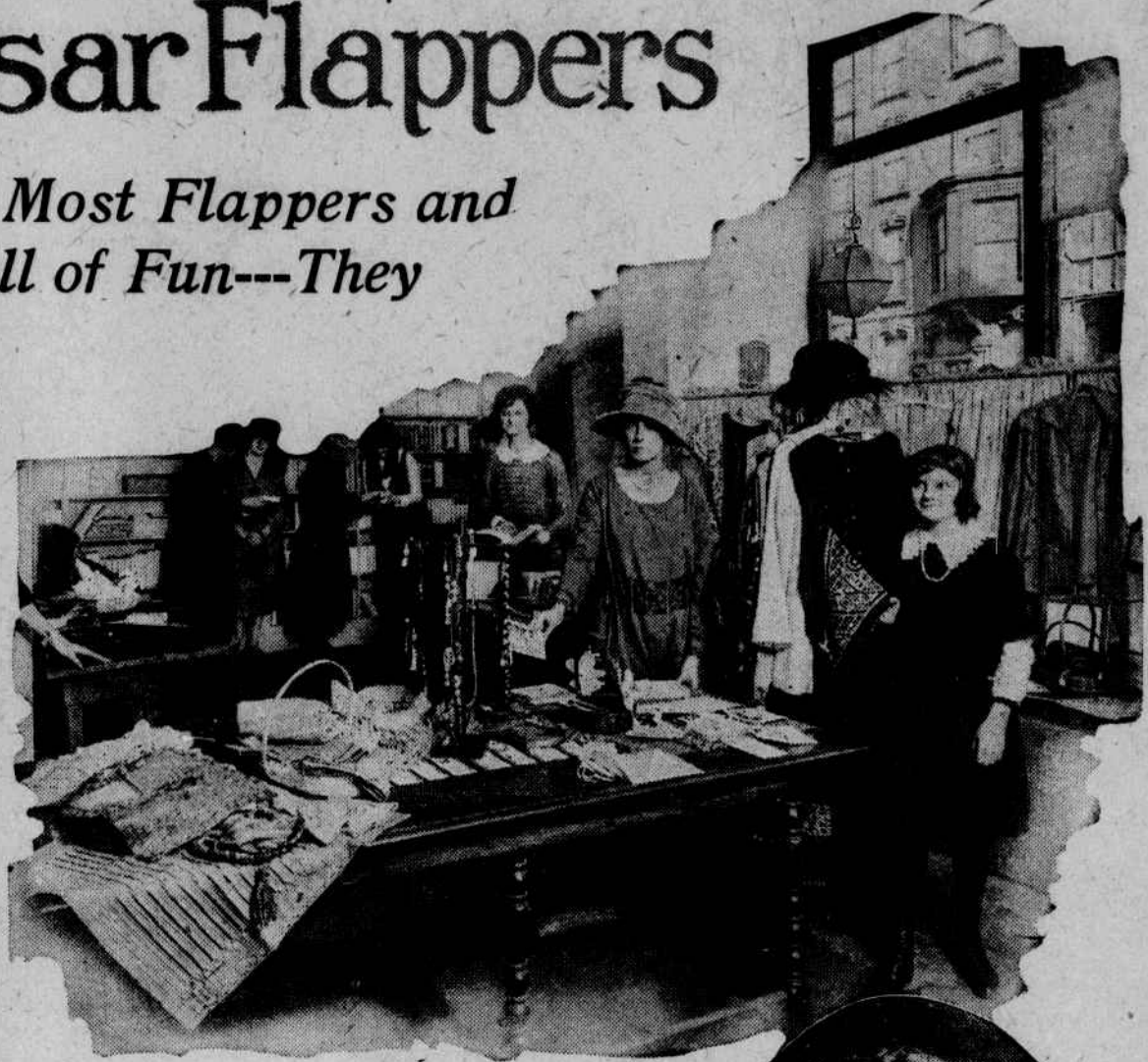


Why the Professors Don't Object to the Vassar Flappers

They're Prettier Than Most Flappers and They're Just as Full of Fun---They Even Go on the Stage and Prove Their Feet Are Nimble---But the Grave School Authorities Aren't Shocked at All

At the left is one of the prettiest of the Vassar flappers—Miss Mary Simpson—as she appeared in the college play "The Follies." The professors objected only to the earrings.

At the right is one of the Vassar shops which the flappers conduct for the college fund.



This is a Vassar flapper of fifty years ago, Miss Mary MacPherson, who was the prettiest and most stylish girl in her class.



Don't these charming Vassar flappers in a chorus number of their play, "The Vassar Follies," compare most favorably with those usually seen in the regular theatrical productions? They are meeting with success wherever they appear.

VASSAR COLLEGE is one of the most conservative educational institutions for women in all this world. Vassar has dignity; Vassar takes itself quite seriously, and has every right to do so. It is an institution for higher learning; its courses lead to Baccalaureate, Masters' and Doctors' degrees and include everything from business arithmetic to Indo-Iranian philology. One would think, on the strength of all this, that Vassar's student body is made up of New England spinsters—all spinsters are from New England—and serious, unpersonable bookworms in imitation tortoise shell effects.

It is not. Vassar's got flappers—lots of them. The professors are a rather staid, circumspect lot, as professors are foreordained to be. This is not to say that the students are not circumspect, too; but that word "circumspect" has a sort of unpleasant sound to ears hidden underneath bobbed tresses. It is not a modern word. It is almost obsolete. Nowadays, girls must be busy doing things, and it's next to impossible in these forward looking times for a girl to be circumspect and busy doing things at the same time. Hence, the boasted lack of circumspectness!

As has been pointed out, there are several flappers at Vassar—or maybe more than that. And it would seem reasonable that these giddy, high spirited, daredevil, ultra-modern, very-young young women would be the bane of life for the staid professors; wouldn't it seem so? Yes, it would; but it's not the fact.

It would seem that the frivolous young ladies would exasperate the professors to utter distraction, for flappers do exasperate

folks to utter distraction. That's the curious part of it. That's the strange situation that made this story possible—not only possible, but necessary. The professors, old and young alike, whatever their faculties may be—whether ancient languages or modern cookery—positively do not dislike the flappers. On the contrary, they like them! There are several very learned and very hoary headed male "profs." in Vassar and these are the ones who really do like the flappers a great deal.

Professors, Young and Old, Admire Their Vivacity

Strange, isn't it? Why is it that flappers—sneered at in all America, laughed at and even pitied—are held in high regard at conservative 'old Vassar College? Why are they recognized and respected?

One answer to all these questions is that the professors have had it proved to them that the girls in the lower classes who come to Vassar with all the earmarks of the flapper turn out after a little while to be the backbone of college life and activity. Whether there was any such backbone before flappers were invented is a point of uncertainty. Older people say there was a good deal of it, but everybody knows how older people are inclined to boast and exaggerate when they talk of college days and the heavy snows of their childhood. The chances are that the flapper—poor, misunderstood child—is a potential bulwark of strength to a college. To amend: the flapper is a potential bulwark to a women's college; it is quite doubtful if she is so essentially beneficial to a coeducational institute.

In Vassar they are ebullient spirits, keep-

ing things moving at a most interesting pace. And when Vassar College needs campaigners the flappers are called upon to get to work; and they do get to work. That is another answer to the question: Why do the stodgy old professors like the flappers? In clearer detail this answer is that the girls are working assiduously to raise the Vassar College Salary Endowment Fund. You know what that means; that the flappers are working to get money to pay the professors adequately.

In spite of the fact that the teachers like their giddy charges so well, there is one thing they don't like about them. Flappers' earmarks were barely mentioned a few moments ago; well, that's what the professors dislike. The very pretty Miss Simpson, whose photograph is shown in the upper left corner of the page, has them. What? Earrings!

Vassar professors have a prejudice against earrings, and nobody knows why. If Miss Simpson knew why—if she could have got a reasonable explanation for the perfectly silly objection—she probably would never have gone ahead and worn her earrings when she was photographed. It is quite true that the professors are displeased by the wearing of these bits of pendants. Surely it is not because they are under the impression that they do not become Miss Simpson. They do.

The flapper organization for the campaign to raise its part of the Endowment Fund is the most active of all. Literally active! For one thing, they have organized "The Vassar Follies." Moreover, the "Follies" are playing to crowded houses in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey towns

for the greater glory of Vassar and the increasing prosperity of their teachers.

It is the opinion generally that the show is an excellent one. It is for a good cause. It is making money. These facts ought to, and really do, counterbalance the alleged indignity of skimpy skirts and regulation "Follies" uniforms. For a fact, there is no indignity about it. The "Vassar Follies" girls are flappers, aren't they? Yes, and so there cannot be the least indignity. But there would have been disgrace in such a college show before flappers were invented. Fifty years ago—or twenty-five—or ten—such a show as this one, which is bringing in a good deal of money for the fund, would not have been possible. College women simply could not have acted in it. It would have been most unbecoming to the college's name and dignity.

But styles in girls have changed. Look at the picture of Miss Mary MacPherson on this page and then look at the "Follies" gang and at smiling Miss Simpson. You scarcely need to be told that Miss MacPherson's photograph was taken many years ago. She was an undergraduate at Vassar when the picture was made. Miss Simpson is an undergraduate now.

There's a difference in their clothing. Miss MacPherson is dressed in the fashion of her day, and it allowed her little freedom of movement. But Miss Simpson's clothes are not things—rather an epitome of the new tendency of women to step out freely in long strides to a more abstract freedom.

Well, to get back to some kind of subject. The serious minded professors at Vassar have not the least objection to the "Follies" and their tour. They are wise men and they sit gravely at their desks and let outsiders talk inconsequentially of "foolish 'Follies' flappers." They have the general opinion that these apparently flippant and lightheaded young women are really most sound, and that their ever flowing high spirits and madcapish proclivities are actually fine portents of leadership—leadership in action. Therefore they like the flappers.

It's new; it's modern! Tea table gatherings ask themselves why the flapper was not invented a hundred years ago. Vassar professors know the answer to that: Why, the time was not ready for them! They came along in the natural processes of evolution. They are not worth being flippant about; they are worth being serious about.

Mind you, please, the "Follies" project is not the only accomplished flapper fancy which has helped to endear the young madcaps to the long headed, dour visaged pedagogues. To tell of other of their conquests it will be necessary to tell something of the Vassar College Salary Endowment Fund.

What the Fund Means To Great Women's Colleges

In May, 1920, the General Education Board, connected with the Rockefeller Foundation, made a conditional gift of \$500,000 each to Bryn Mawr, Smith, Wellesley, Mount Holyoke and Vassar. The condition was that each college raise three times the amount through its own efforts. The gift found Bryn Mawr and Smith already in the processes of money raising campaigns and Mount Holyoke and Wellesley about ready to launch them. Vassar

was merely considering ways and means when the offer was made.

Vassar got under way last October with her campaign and has gone ahead with amazing speed. The conditions had been fulfilled by the middle of December and now the Vassar fund has reached approximately \$2,500,000, with \$500,000 still to be raised. The methods employed by the college women and alumnae to raise this money are most interesting.

"The Vassar Follies" have been discussed. But the greatest single money getter is Vassar Shop. Vassar Shop is the group outcome of the individual efforts of nearly 6,000 alumnae to raise \$250 each, the amount assigned based on 6,000 alumnae and students. This would total \$1,500,000. Before the holidays there were Vassar shops all over the Eastern States, but now they are all centered in the big shop as it now exists at 551 Madison avenue. The Vassar Club of New York has taken over the scheme in an effort to raise a group pledge of \$10,000, in addition to assisting consignors to raise their individual quotas of \$250.

The Vassar Shop sells everything—almost. Beads, books, gowns, cigarettes, pogo sticks. Almost everything!

But they are not the only ones who are merchandising. The flappers are doing a bit of it around the campus. Such old tricks as selling the radiators are not in the bags of the up to date girls of Vassar undergraduate classes. At the college the students are doing all sorts of things to make good a pledge of \$100,000. This part of the fund must come from the girls themselves, for their parents and relatives are listed in another group, called "Friends of Vassar and Potential Donors."

The ingenuity of the flapper is one of her principal charms. One girl has been renting out her fur coat and turning over

the rent money to the fund. Another rents out her alarm clock. But the prize financier of the lot is the seventeen-year-old girl who raises odd bits of change for the fund by killing mice for girls less brave.

They are a terribly busy lot. They are giving benefit teas, coaching, having shop sales and bazaars, and doing many things in the hope of insuring the professors a more adequate wage system.

Naturally, the professors fail utterly to resent the Vassar flappers.

Jap Suffragettes Active

MEN in Japan have already adopted European dress—at least for the street—and women are following their lead. The reason for this, according to Mme. Inouye, Dean of Women at the University of Tokyo, is that her countrywomen are rebelling against a slavery to countless costumes, one for every occasion and all subject to complete ripping and remaking after each washing or cleaning. The Japanese women, mistakenly perhaps, think that Western women are free from this labor.

"Besides," says Mme. Inouye, "the bulky, flowing kimono is unsuitable for an active life, easily soiled and hampering to women." The Dean is an attendant of the Conference for the Limitation of Armament at Washington, where she is representing the college women of Japan. She wears a trim tailored suit on the street.

In Japan a special cloth is made that must be worn for a certain occasion and then only. If a woman attends a wedding only a particular textile is permissible. If she attends a funeral another must be worn, and so on for every occasion. Japanese women ask to be released from this galling custom.

"Women in Japan," said the Dean, "have a better time than they used and their freedom is being extended. They now have a chance of domestic independence, for the

domination of the father-in-law is waning. When a son marries now his tendency is to take his wife and establish a home of his own.

"Old maids are few in Japan, and while freedom of choice in a husband is gaining ground marriage among women is almost universal and divorced women are rare. The real desire is happiness in the family and the modern educated woman in Japan tries to live up to that ideal."

"QUAINT" is the latest word of the world that must have a new and uncommon adjective. It has quite out-moded "amusing" in the slang of the studios and among those who affect the artistic life. The dictionary meaning of the word—"combining an antique appearance with a pleasing oddity, fancifulness, or whimsicalness"—has been quite submerged in the passing craze for its use. When the Governor's daughter in "The Tavern" said to the Vagabond, "You are the quaintest man I ever knew" she did not really mean what the dictionary says the word means. She was admiring his powers of deduction. But the "latest" word has been worked into the speech and that was the desired thing. The tone always used in connection with "quaint" is patronizing, whether it is applied to a human being, a picture, or what not. The user invariably tries to give the impression that the object thus passed upon could have been done ever so much better if he or she had had a hand in making it. To be "quaint" nowadays is to be ever so slightly damned.